

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

For Release May 23, 1975

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## AID PROGRAM FOR MARINE MAMMALS ANNOUNCED

Research on marine mammals will be expanded under new regulations establishing a Federal grant-in-aid program for such investigations, the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today. The program will cover research on polar bears, walruses, sea otters, manatees, and dugongs by State and local governments, private institutions, and qualified private citizens.

The exact amount of Federal funds available to support such research has yet to be determined, the Fish and Wildlife Service said.

The new regulations became effective upon their recent publication in the Federal Register. The regulations were proposed initially in the Federal Register on October 21, 1974, and the public was invited to comment. The final rulemaking reflects the comments received and corrects technical errors.

Under the regulations, preliminary proposals and project documentation should be submitted to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Cooperative Research, Washington, D.C. 20240, before September 1 of the year preceding the fiscal year in which the research is contemplated. The proposals will be judged on the priority and significance of the marine mammal problem to be addressed, the capabilities of the applicant to fulfill the objectives, and the probability of using the results to benefit marine mammals.

If the proposed project is to be conducted within the territorial limits of a State, the Secretary will not enter into an agreement with a non-Federal interest other than a State without first consulting with the State agency. The Fish and Wildlife Service will have the right to inspect and review work being done at any time, and projects can be suspended or terminated by the Service if the objectives are not pursued expeditiously, timely and adequate reports are not submitted, or if satisfactory progress has not been maintained.

All work will be performed in accord with applicable State laws except when in conflict with Federal laws or regulations, in which case Federal laws or regulations shall prevail.